

1926 (4)

Form F.C. 1

# FARMERS PAY A BIG BILL FOR DOCKAGE

## Clean Seed and Clean Land Will Prevent It

Dockage reports on shipments of spring wheat and other small grains in Minnesota indicate a very serious situation. The following figures and comments are from a report by C. P. Bull, state weed commissioner, presented at the Farmers' Week Short Course at University Farm, St. Paul, January 18-23, 1926.

### Is Dockage Increasing?

This question may be answered best by the following figures:

#### SPRING WHEAT IN MINNESOTA

Years	Per Cent of Dockage	Years	Per Cent of Dockage
1899-1903	1.5	1914-1918	3.7
1904-1908	2.6	1919-1923	4.8
1909-1913	3.0	Sept. 1-Dec. 31, 1925	5.0

### How Serious Is the Problem?

In 1923, out of 55 counties in Minnesota—

- 11 counties had more than 10 per cent of dockage,
- 15 counties more than 5 per cent of dockage,
- and only 7 counties less than 3 per cent.

This means that in 1925 the equivalent of 1319 cars of dockage was threshed, hauled to the local elevators and shipped to Minneapolis or other terminal markets. At the same rate, the equivalent of more than 1700 freight cars was used for hauling dockage in 1924.

The following are the figures for the average dockage on wheat delivered to country elevators from farms:

- Minnesota, 7.2 per cent.
- North Dakota, 11.3 per cent.
- South Dakota, 7.7 per cent.
- Montana, 2.5 per cent.

In certain Minnesota counties the average was more than 13 per cent. In the four states named 11,650,800 bushels (60 lbs. each) of dockage were shipped to market.

### Who Pays the Bill?

More than \$675,000 was paid for threshing the dockage output of the four states. More than \$800,000 was the cost of shipping it to market. Farmers who

cleaned their wheat before marketing it cleared 5 cents a bushel for cleaning, and, besides, kept the dockage at home for use in feeding.

At the estimated rate of \$14 per acre as the cost of growing wheat, allowing 7.2 per cent for dockage (largely weed seeds), the average cost of producing dockage would be \$1.01 an acre. On the basis of the average acreage for the last five years, the total would be \$1,900,000 annually in Minnesota. This tells plainly who pays the bill.

### What Can Be Done?

From six representative sections of Minnesota, the State Department of Agriculture gathered 653 samples of seed in April, 1923. These represented the seed sown by 477 farmers. The State Seed Laboratory analyzed the samples. The results were astounding. The average dockage (weed seeds) was 4.93 per cent of all samples.

	Vicinity of	Dockage Per Cent
Section 1	Warren	3.45
Section 2	Bemidji	5.79
Section 3	St. Cloud	5.40
Section 4	Elbow Lake	3.08
Section 5	Olivia	6.45
Section 6	Mankato	5.77

By actual weed seed count, the farmers sowed an average of 1.66 weed seeds per square foot, or 1750 weed seeds per pound of field seed sown. One man was sowing 61.3 per cent of dockage, or 170 weed seeds per square foot.

Clean seed, free from disease and weed seeds, is one of the remedies for the existing situation. Careful seedbed preparation, with good farm practice in the rotation of crops, in tillage, and in the use of grain-cleaning machinery, is another means to stop the loss. County agents may be counted on for practical suggestions as to methods of treating seed grain for smut and other diseases. If no county agent is available, information may be obtained directly from University Farm, St. Paul.

Details of methods for the control and eradication of weeds may be found in Bulletin No. 43 of the State Department of Agriculture, and copies may be had by writing to the department at the Old Capitol, St. Paul.

Let your slogan be—

## Clean Seed and Clean Land